

REMARKS

I. Amendment to the Claims

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, twenty-eight (28) claims are pending in the application. Of the pending claims, six (6) claims are independent. Claim Nos. 21 and 23 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter from Claim Nos. 22 and 24, respectively. Claim Nos. 22 and 24 have been amended to recite the dependent subject matter previously presented in Claim No. 8.

Applicant submits that the amendments to the finally rejected claims, Claim Nos. 21 and 23, are being made in accordance with 37 CFR §1.116 because these claims are being amended to comply with a requirement of form expressly set forth in a previous Office Action. In particular, the examiner concluded that Claim Nos. 22 and 24, which respectively depend directly from Claim Nos. 21 and 23, are directed to allowable subject matter and that both of these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the respective base claims. Therefore, as the logical corollary to the examiner's conclusion, Claim Nos. 21 and 23 are allowable by including the respective limitations from Claim Nos. 22 and 24. Accordingly, the amendments to Claim Nos. 21 and 23 comply with a requirement of form explicitly set forth in the Office Action of January 21, 2004 because the amendments satisfy the Examiner's explicit identification of allowable subject matter for these claims.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 21 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Skochdopole patent (6,060,407). Applicant has amended Claim Nos. 21 and 23 to incorporate the allowable subject matter from Claim Nos. 22 and 24, respectively, and submit that Claim Nos. 21 and 23 as amended and their dependent claims, as amended, are in a

condition for allowance according to the Examiner's conclusion regarding allowable subject matter.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

The examiner has concluded that Claim Nos. 1-20 and 25-28 are allowable. As discussed above, the examiner has concluded that Claim Nos. 22 and 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

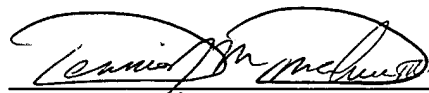
IV. Conclusion

For the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim Nos. 1-28 are allowable over the prior art of record.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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